



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## SB 2223 SD 1 RELATING TO SALES OF SEAFOOD

Statement for Senate Committee on  
Energy and Natural Resources  
February 26, 1990

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The purpose of this bill is to prohibit the sale of ahi, opakapaka, or onaga that are less than three pounds in weight.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The underlying intent of this bill is to ensure the future presence in Hawaiian waters of these economically important fish species which are subject to increasing fishing pressure. However, the rationale for the proposed prohibition on the sale of ahi, opakapaka, and onaga less than three pounds in weight is not immediately obvious. What is the biological basis for the three pound limit? It is our understanding that ahi, for example, do not begin to reproduce before they reach 30 pounds weight, hence if protection of the parent stock was of interest, a ban on the taking of fish considerably larger than the three pound limit would seem to be necessary.

Considerable biological data exist for all the species cited in HRS 188-40, and we would prefer than any limitations on species to be caught or catch weights would be guided by the biological basis for those decisions. Such decisions are probably best made by the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council.